



## **ADULT SOCCER RULES**

*(Edited February 13, 2021)*

### **I. Player Eligibility**

- A. Each team shall be limited to twenty-four (24) players on their roster, the team manager and coach are included in the roster limit unless stated in writing that they do not intend to play. Exception: Twenty-six (26) player limit in all women's leagues, Men's 45+ and Men's 55+.
- B. \*\*The Men's 65+ has a player limit of twenty (20) players on their roster.
- C. The Team Manager is required to have all players sign up to their team roster online via [www.ActiveMONTGOMERY.org](http://www.ActiveMONTGOMERY.org) **by the Thursday during week three of the season.**
  - Additions and deletions must occur by 11:59pm on the designated roster freeze date in order to be official.
    - That date will be specified by the League Office prior to the season.
  - **(UPDATED)** Official rosters will be sent to the field staff after the roster freeze date.
- D. \*\*A player may only be listed on one team roster within any men's, women's, or co-rec team per age group/ league (i.e. one Men's Open, Men's 45+, etc.).
  - **(NEW Clarification)** Each league contains divisions. The Men's Open League contains up to 4 divisions. For example, a player that participates on a Men's Open Division 1 team may not participate on a Men's Open Division 2, Men's Open Division 3 or Men's Open Division 4 team.
- E. **\*\*Co-Rec teams only:**
  - Use of guest players is allowed throughout the season. Each CoRec team may use up to 4 guest players per game.
  - All players including Guest Players must complete a waiver form, show ID and sign in before participating.
  - **(NEW)** There is no roster freeze during the regular season, but all players are required to complete enrollment prior to participating.
  - Playoff teams may use rostered players only.
  - The roster deadline for Co-Rec leagues is prior to the start of playoffs.
  - Online Individual Enrollment will be accepted throughout the season.
- F. **(NEW)** Men's 65+ teams:
  - There is no roster freeze during the regular season, but all players are required to complete enrollment prior to participating.
  - Playoff teams may use rostered players only.
  - The roster deadline for Men's 65 leagues is prior to the start of playoffs.
  - Online Individual Enrollment will be accepted throughout the season.
- G. **\*\* (UPDATED)** Replacements for players with season ending injuries will be accepted after the roster freeze date only if a doctor's note is provided for the injured

- player. This must be completed and sent to the league office on the Thursday prior to the next game.
- H. Any team using a player not on their roster or a player under the age limit shall automatically forfeit each game the player participated in.
- Players under 18 years of age or still in High School are not eligible to participate in any of the leagues.
  - If a team uses a player under an assumed name or a currently suspended player, that team shall be dropped from the league and all team players will be suspended from league play for one (1) year.
  - Each game played with the ineligible player and all scheduled games not played, shall be forfeited to the opponents.
  - Any coach/team manager who permits an ineligible player to participate in a league game shall be suspended for a minimum of one (1) game.
- I. \*Protests as to the use of an ineligible player are the only acceptable form of protest.
- An ineligibility protest must be brought to the field marshal's attention prior to the start of a game.
  - The field marshal must then verify that all players have shown identification and have signed in. In this case, if the player has only stepped on the field, but not participated in a play, the player can be asked to leave the field and play may resume without penalty to the team.
  - **(UPDATED)** Player eligibility protests may occur after rosters have been finalized or after week three of the season for all Men's leagues, Women's leagues and during Men's 65+ and CoRec league playoffs.
  - This policy also applies to the Spring Playoffs.
- J. Any team dropped from the league after the schedule has been completed, or due to league violations, shall forfeit their entire registration fee.
- K. Active professionals may not participate in the league.
- L. Players in age limit leagues must turn that age during the calendar year in which the matches will be played to meet the minimum age requirement. Thus, a player must turn that age by December 31<sup>st</sup> of that year to be eligible.
- M. Players in all adult soccer leagues must submit a valid government-issued photo ID that provides the date of birth (i.e., driver's license, passport, MVA ID, MCRD ID) at each match.
- If a photo ID is not provided, that player will not be permitted to play. Any player on the field of play found without submitting a photo ID will result in forfeiture of game.
  - **(NEW)** Photo ID's from non-MCR Leagues do not apply.
  - All players must provide a photo ID for the playoff tournament.
- N. (If Applicable) In Games without a Field Marshal:
- Managers will be responsible for checking the eligibility of the opposing team before each league game. League Office will provide a printed copy of the team roster to each team manager starting week 3 of the season. Each player will submit a photo ID during the check-in process or that player will not be permitted to play.

- The home team is responsible for submitting a game report for each league match. Failure to submit a game report will result in a deduction of one point in the standings for the home team.

## II. **Playing Rules**

- A. (NEW COVID-19 Addition): Mask wearing is mandatory for all leagues and divisions during game play. Violation of the rule will result in an indirect kick for the opposing team. This rule will be enforced by the referees. Failure to comply will result in removal from gameplay.**
- B. Unless modified by this set of rules, all games shall be played in accordance with the most current F.I.F.A. rules.
- C. A game must start with a minimum of eight (8) players.
- D. Co-Rec League: 11v11
1. A team shall consist of eleven (11) players, no more than six (6) of one sex.
  2. There must be a minimum of eight (8) players, no more than a maximum of six (6) players of one sex to begin the game.
  3. Substitutions shall be unrestricted by sex if a team does not exceed six (6) of one sex.
  4. Each goal scored by a male shall count as one (1) point.
  5. Each goal scored by a female shall count as two (2) points.
  6. A 2-point woman's goal is scored when the last offensive player to touch the ball is a woman and the defense has not clearly collected and controlled the ball after her touch prior to the score.
  7. **Exceptions:** the score was from a defensive misplay or a woman kicks into her own goal, it shall be a one (1) point goal.
  8. Penalty kicks will only count as (1) point for both sexes.
- E. Men's 65+ League: 9v9.
1. Games will be played on a shortened field (40 x 60 yards). There will be no offside penalty.
    - a. One referee assigned per match.
- F. Substitutions shall be unlimited and may be made with the consent of the referee at the following times:
1. Prior to a throw-in, by the team in possession, by either team
  2. After a goal or goal kick, by either team
  3. After an injury stoppage, one for one
  4. At half time
- G. Game Playing Time:
1. Five (5) minute half time for all leagues.
  2. Men's Open, Men's 45+, Men's 55+, Men's 65+, and All Women's Leagues
    - a. Two (2) 45-minute halves
  3. All Co-Rec Leagues
    - a. Two (2) 40-minute halves

- H. Grace Period - For all league games the clock will start at the scheduled starting time.
  - 1. **(NEW)** Both team managers and the head referee must sync the current time based on mobile network time to avoid conflicting game start times.
  - 2. After fifteen (15) minutes on the game clock has expired, the game officially will be declared a forfeiture if the team(s) does not have the minimum number of players required or the team is not prepared to play.
- I. The game will be considered official if one full half has been played.
- J. Every player must wear a unique numbered jersey of the same color for the entire game. The number must be six (6) inches or larger.
  - 1. A team is allowed only one player without a number, that player will be designated zero (0), if no other player is wearing the number zero (0) or double zero (00).
- K. Appropriate soccer shoes or sneakers must be worn. Metal spikes are not allowed. Shin guards are required.
- L. **(REMINDER)** If a team forfeits two games in a season, the team may be dropped from the league, and no refund will be issued.
  - 1. To be reinstated, the removed team must pay a \$100.00 re-entry fee.
- M. The home team is listed second on the schedule and is responsible for supplying the game ball. In addition, the home team is required to change jerseys if there is a color conflict.
- N. Female players may protect themselves above the waist by “gluing”, i.e. using hands to cover an area susceptible to injury by the ball.
- O. Slide tackling is not permitted in the following leagues: Men’s 45+, Men’s 55+, Men’s 65+, all Women’s Leagues, and all Co-Rec Leagues.
  - 1. A slide tackle is defined as a player leaving their feet to play the ball within the proximity of an opposing player.
  - 2. Penalty: indirect free kick from the spot of the foul.
  - 3. The referee may issue either a yellow or red card if the act is deemed to injure or is from behind.
- P. Playoff games ending in ties will be decided by the following:
  - 1. two (2) ten-minute overtime periods, golden goal
  - 2. FIFA penalty kicks

### III. **\*Playoff Format (NEW As of 2019)\***

- A. Men’s Open Divisions, Men’s 45+ Divisions and CoRec Divisions
  - 1. Top four teams in each division advance to the postseason single elimination playoff.
  - 2. The divisions will not be combined unless otherwise specified by the League Office due special circumstances.
- B. Men’s 65+ Division
  - 1. Two 25-minute halves will be played per game.
  - 2. All games will be completed in one weekend.

#### IV. **Disciplinary Action**

- A. Any player receiving a red card is suspended for a **minimum** of one (1) game (the next game played by that team). If a player receives a second suspension in a season, that player is suspended for one year.
- B. Any player receiving a yellow card will leave the playing field for ten (10) minutes, a substitute player is permitted. Any player accumulating three (3) yellow cards in different games of a season will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) game. The second suspension will be for one year.
- C. **(UPDATE)** Any player with a record of multiple suspensions in separate seasons will be subject to progressively stronger suspensions for infractions occurring in the current season.
  - 1. This will be based on the severity of previous or current infractions.
- B. **(REMINDER)** Suspensions roll over from season to season and include playoff games.
  - 1. Example: If a player receives a suspension for 3 games as a result of cards given in the final game of the season, that suspension is applied to the next scheduled game for that team.
- D. **(UPDATED)** All team managers are responsible for the behavior of their players and spectators. If any player or spectator runs onto the field of play during a game (except when substituting), the game will be declared over by the referees and declared a forfeiture by the Recreation Department. That spectator will be subject to suspension from the league.
- E. **(NEW)** Any spectator, Team Manager or Coach that engages in inappropriate behavior toward the players of the opposing team, referees or staff shall be banned from attending MCR adult soccer league games.
- F. Any player, manager, coach, or spectator who approaches a referee in a negative manner after the conclusion of a league game shall be suspended for at least one (1) game.
- G. Any player who makes contact, physically strikes, or verbally threatens any official, staff person or player will be suspended from all Montgomery County Recreation sponsored activities for one year from the date of the incident. If the physical altercation involves more than two players from a team, that team shall be suspended from the league for at least one (1) year from the date of the incident.
- H. **\*\*Any Player** that receives a red card for violent behavior must pay a minimum fee of \$50.00 per red card given. This fee must be paid before that player can return from his/ her suspension. Please see page five (5) and six (6) for details.
- I. **(NEW)** Ejected/ Red Carded/ 2 Yellow Carded players, team managers, coaches and spectators must leave the park upon ejection.
  - 1. Refusal to do so by any ejected player in a timely manner will result in forfeiture of that game.
  - 2. In addition, that player will be suspended for more time in addition to the original infraction.
- J. Any player wishing to appeal a red card must submit an appeal in writing within 72 hours of the red card being issued to the League Office.

- K. Any team who violates the M-NCPPC regulations regarding the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or use of illegal substances on park/school property shall be suspended for the remainder of the season and dropped from the league.

V. **RED CARD POLICY**

A red card fine has been implemented for all future Soccer Seasons. The purpose of this rule change is to help improve sportsmanship, provide a more positive competitive league and to reduce the number of aggressive incidents that lead to unsportsmanlike behavior. Moving Forward, any player receiving a straight Red Card for Violent Behavior (to include fighting, striking, attempting to strike, spitting at or on someone and referee abuse/assault) will receive a minimum \$50.00 fine which must be paid before the next game, otherwise the team will forfeit every game until the fee is paid.

- **Red Card Violations**

(a) Any player who receives a red card for ***violent behavior*** will receive a minimum \$50.00 fine and will be suspended for a minimum of 1 year.

(b) Any player who receives a second red card for ***violent behavior*** will receive a minimum \$100 fine and will be suspended for a minimum of 1 year.

Note: The League Manager reserves the right to overturn any yellow or red card issued.

**Caution (Yellow Card) - Examples**

1. Unsportsmanlike Behavior
2. Dissent
3. Slide Tackle
4. Persistent Infringement
5. Interfering with the goalkeeper
6. Fail to Respect the Required Distance (10-yard rule)
7. Enter/Leave the field of play without the referee's permission
8. Attempt to deceive the referee (faking an injury, taking a dive)

**Ejection (Red Card) - Examples**

1. Double Yellow
2. Persistent Dissent
3. Foul and Abusive Language
4. Serious Foul Play
5. Violent Conduct
6. Denying a goal scoring opportunity

7. Spitting at, Hitting, Striking
8. Fighting

VI. **APPEAL PROCESS**

- i. If a participant is suspended for violations under rule III., Disciplinary Action, and chooses to appeal, that individual, player, coach or manager will be allowed 72 hours following the receipt of the decision, to respond in writing.
- ii. Any Suspensions will be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the appeal.
- iii. An Appeal Board will hear an appeal only if requested. An appeal will be heard within five working days from the date that the appeal is received by the Sports Program Supervisor/ League Coordinator.
- iv. The Appeal Board will be composed of persons knowledgeable of the standard regulations used by the Recreation Department as well as the philosophy and objectives of the sports programs. The Board will designate one individual to act as the Commissioner of the Board. The Board will be convened and assigned on a case-by-case basis by the Team Leader/ Sponsor supervising the incident. The Board must comprise of at least three members to hear an appeal and to determine the outcome. No more than one (1) member of the Appeal Board may be a current Sports Team member. It is recommended that Countywide or Area Recreation Advisory Board members serve if possible.
- v. The Appeal Board will meet and make recommendations concerning the conduct and rulings associated with team sports as referred. The Board will not rule on appeals concerning officials' calls or rule interpretations.
- vi. The Program Supervisor/ League Director will present a written statement of all findings and/ or action(s) taken.
- vii. Any individual requesting an appeal may present any evidence having a bearing on the case before the Board. Additional testimony may be heard from up to 2 additional individuals unless specifically waived by the Board.
- viii. The Appeals Board will make a decision concerning the action to be followed. The decision to uphold the original decision or to modify or disallow the decision will be communicated to the parties involved, in writing, within a reasonable period (five days working days of the hearing).

VII. **Official Scorer/Field Supervisor (if applicable)**

- A. On fields without Field Marshals/ Field Supervisors, the home team is responsible for submitting a game report form to the Recreation Department after the completion of the match. In addition, all yellow and red cards handed out at the match must be reported at this time. Failure to report the score or cards issued within 48 hours after the completion of the match will result in no points awarded to either team.
- B. The Field Supervisor is responsible for setting up the equipment (corner flags and nets).

- C. In case of inclement weather, MCR follows Montgomery Park's weather policy for cancellations. See methods below:
1. **(RECOMMENDED METHOD)** Visit [www.montgomeryparks.org/RainoutLine](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/RainoutLine) to see field status information and to sign up for email or text notifications.
  2. Call the RainoutLine phone number at **301-579-5610** and enter the extension of your field to hear field status information. (New field extensions are available on the [RainoutLine Website](http://RainoutLine Website))
  3. Download the [RainoutLine.com](http://RainoutLine.com) Mobile App, available for Apple and Android users. View the free iPhone or Android Mobile App (Search for Montgomery Parks)
  4. See the Inclement Weather/ Rain Out Letter for more details.
- D. If weather conditions change during a game, it will be up to the game officials to make the decision regarding the cancellation of the game. If a game is cancelled at the game site, the home team manager of the game is responsible for informing the League Office.
- E. The Field Supervisor has the responsibility to promote safety in the game and can act in preventing continuous unsportsmanlike play by notifying officials and team managers of unsportsmanlike acts.
- F. Co-Rec Leagues (if applicable): The first two teams of the day have the responsibility to set up the nets and corner flags and the last two teams take down. The home Team Manager of the last game keeps the equipment and is responsible until the following week.

#### VIII. **Tie Breakers**

Standings will be based on the criteria below in the following order:

- A. League record, three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, zero (0) points for a loss, and negative one (-1) point for a forfeit.
- B. Head-to-Head Competition
- C. Goal Differential (Max/Min 3 per game)
- D. Goals scored against for entire season
- E. Goals scored for during the entire season (Max 3 per game)
- F. Most shut outs
- G. Coin Toss

#### IX. **Awards**

- A. Awards shall be as follows:

Division Champion	24 player awards (Men's Open & CoRec)
	26 player awards (Men's 45+, 55+, All women's leagues)
	20 player awards (Men's 65+)
Playoff Champion (Spring Season)	1 team award



Playoff Runner-up

1 team award

X. **Temperature Rule**

- A. Whenever the temperature becomes a concern with the players due to extreme heat, games can be reduced to four (4) 20-minute quarters (with five-minute breaks between quarters).
- B. This decision must be reached before the game begins and **both teams must agree.** If one team fails to agree then the game will be played as normal.
- C. Once this option has been agreed to, the decision cannot be changed at any point during the game.
- D. League Office reserves the right to institute mandatory temperature rule games for safety reasons.
- E. Teams must remind the referees that this option does exist.

XI. **Team Placement**

- A. A team that places first within their division must automatically move up within the league and a team that places last will automatically move down. Any exceptions, changes or additions to this rule must be approved by the League Office.

XII. **Rescheduling of Games**

- A. Two rainout dates are available after the last scheduled date for leagues with an even number of teams.
- B. If the situation arises where those rain out dates are exceeded, alternate days of the week will be considered by the League Office. If alternate days are not available, then a modified version of the game or a refund may be considered.
- C. Forfeited games will not be rescheduled.
- D. Games will not be rescheduled after schedules have been posted unless there is inclement weather, unexpected field closure, or an MCR mistake was made.